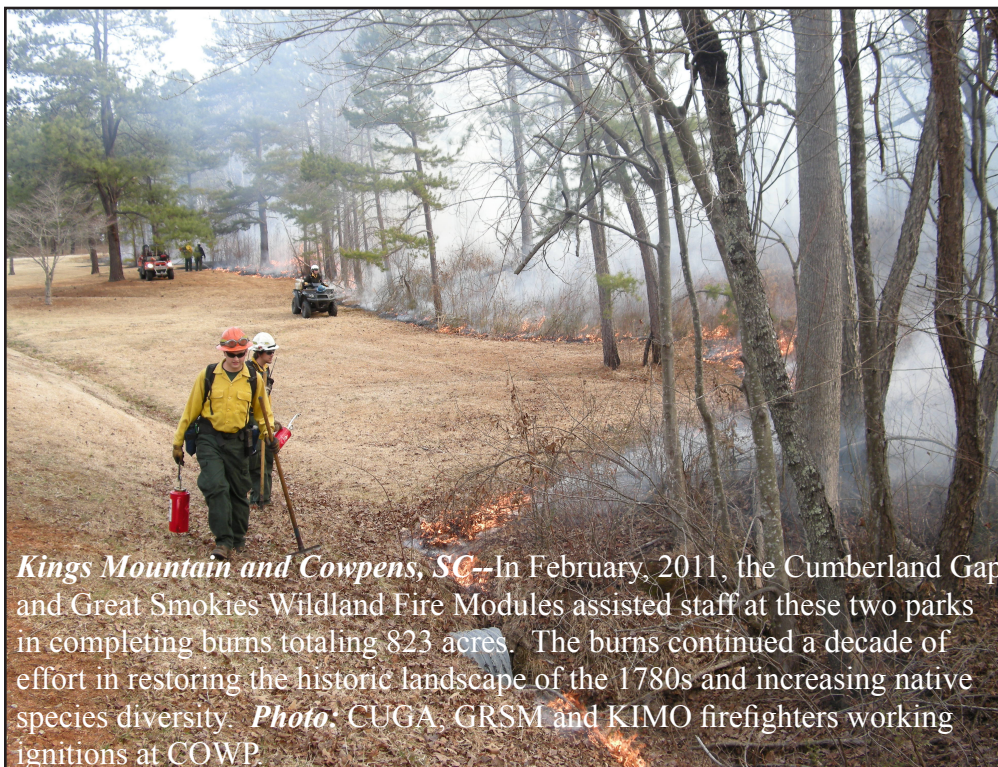




Open Understory

Prescribed Burns Successful at Natchez Trace and South Carolina Battlefield Parks



Kings Mountain and Cowpens, SC--In February, 2011, the Cumberland Gap and Great Smokies Wildland Fire Modules assisted staff at these two parks in completing burns totaling 823 acres. The burns continued a decade of effort in restoring the historic landscape of the 1780s and increasing native species diversity. **Photo:** CUGA, GRSM and KIMO firefighters working ignitions at COWP.



Natchez Trace, MS and TN--From Feb. 14 to March 8, 2011, firefighters from Natchez Trace Parkway cooperated with multiple partners to complete over 1,000 acres of prescribed burns in two states, covering 400 miles of highway in the process. **Left:** BISO and NATR firefighters holding on the Old Trace burn unit at NATR.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND TRAINING

April 26-28: NPS All Hazard Resource Advisor Class (NCTC, VA)

May 17-19: Fire in Eastern Oak Forests Conference (Springfield, MO)

June 6-17: Southern Area Advanced Academy (Chattanooga, TN)

For a complete list, check our SharePoint site at
<http://bit.ly/bYeP1L>

Focus on Education

On Fire for Junior Ranger Day

On Saturday, April 23, parks across the Southeast will celebrate Junior Ranger Day with special programs and hands-on activities. If you haven't finalized your plans yet, there's still time to request a wildland fire display (**shown below**) or other materials from the regional office to add some fire to your Junior Ranger Day. For more information, please call Rudy Evenson at 404-507-5628 or e-mail rudy_evenson@nps.gov.



New Faces and Places

SERO, NATR, and MACA
Welcome New Staff

The **Regional Fire and Aviation program** welcomes **Mike Ward**, Prescribed Fire Specialist. Mike comes to Atlanta from Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, where he served as AFMO. Before Okefenokee, Mike also worked in fire at Merritt Island, where he cooperated often with NPS staff managing fire at Canaveral National Seashore. Mike's responsibilities in the NPS Regional Office will include planning and administration of prescribed burns.

Natchez Trace Parkway is filling out its fire staff with **Travis Neppl**, fuels management specialist, and **Shawn Maiden**, fuels technician. Congratulations to Shawn on his promotion! The Cumberland Gap Wildland Fire Module will miss him, but the Trace will benefit from his experience.

Mammoth Cave welcomes **Drew Page** as the park's new fuels technician. As the only full-time fire specialist in the park, Drew will be responsible for training staff members in a variety of divisions, as well as planning and implementing prescribed burns in the park. Congratulations on your new position!

Firefighters from across the Southeast Region bid a fond farewell to **Mark Mendonca**, who leaves the Great Smokies Wildland Fire Module for a new position with the Alpine Hotshots at Rocky Mountain National Park. Good luck, Mark, we will miss you!

This wiregrass found southeast of Terrapin Point on Cumberland Island is a fire-adapted indicator species, the last remnant of a long-leaf pine savannah.

RESEARCH UPDATE

PRESETTLEMENT FIRE REGIME MAPPING AT CUIS, MACA, AND BISO

St. Marys, GA--University of North Carolina Professor Cecil Frost, working under contract with Southeast Regional fire ecologist Caroline Noble, has completed a presettlement fire regime vegetation map for Cumberland Island National Seashore. Next in line are Mammoth Cave NP and Big South Fork NRR. Frost and Noble's methodology, which looks at soils, topography, existing vegetation, presence of fire-adapted indicator species, fire scars, and historic documents, has the potential to be used as a protocol for reconstructing natural fire regimes across the National Park Service. For more information, please call Caroline Noble at 850-591-7122 or e-mail caroline_noble@nps.gov.

STUDY OF LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF FIRE SEVERITY ON CYPRESS DOMES CONTINUES AT BICY

Naples, FL--In 2010, University of Florida Professor Leda Kobziar began studying the effects of the 2009 Deep Fire on wetlands vegetation at Big Cypress National Preserve. NPS fire managers typically exclude fire from wetlands like the areas that burned in 2009, so analysis of the effects of the Deep Fire may help validate or modify those policies. Funding was recently announced to continue this study.

Aerial photo of Deep Fire from Inciweb.